

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing Of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented): A coating for a cutting tool, comprising
a wear-protection layer having a metallic-crystalline structure,
a top layer, and
a separating layer applied to at least one portion of the wear-protection layer and
arranged between the wear-protection layer and the top layer,
wherein the separating layer has a structure which is not metallic-crystalline and limits
the adhesion of the top layer to the wear-protection layer, and
wherein the separating layer (i) contains or is a chemical compound with a
preponderantly covalent bond, (ii) is strongly non-stoichiometrically composed, or (iii) is a
strongly stressed layer.
2. (Canceled)
3. (Previously Presented): The coating as defined in claim 1, wherein the top layer
has a color which perceptively differs from a color of the wear-protection layer.

4. (Previously Presented): The coating as defined in claim 1, wherein the top layer is a ZrC, CrC, ZrN, CrN, TiN, a TiC, a HfC or a HfN layer.

5. (Previously Presented): The coating as defined in claim 1, wherein the top layer has a metallic-crystalline structure.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Previously Presented): The coating as defined in claim 1, wherein the separating layer is an oxide layer containing at least one metal from the IVth or Vth group of the chemical periodic system of elements.

8. (Previously Presented): The coating as defined in claim 7, wherein the metal is an element of the IVth group.

9. (Previously Presented): The coating as defined in claim 7, wherein the metal is an element of the Vth group.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Canceled)

12. (Canceled)

13. (Previously Presented): The coating as defined in claim 1, wherein the separating layer has an inner stress which significantly differs from an inner stress of the wear-protection layer and the top layer.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Canceled)

16. (Previously Presented): The coating as defined in claim 1, wherein the wear-protection layer is a TiAlN layer or a CrAlN layer.

17. (Previously Presented): The coating as defined in claim 1, wherein the wear-protection layer has a single-layer structure.

18. (Previously Presented): The coating as defined in claim 1, wherein the wear-protection layer has a multi-layer structure.

19. (Previously Presented) A cutting tool comprising:
a basic body made of a hard material; and
a coating which is applied to the basic body, the coating comprising a metallic hard material layer as a wear-protection layer, a top layer, and a separating layer applied to at

least one portion of the wear-protection layer and arranged between the wear-protection layer and the top layer,

wherein the separating layer has a structure which is not metallic-crystalline, and

wherein the separating layer (i) contains or is a chemical compound with a preponderantly covalent bond, (ii) is strongly non-stoichiometrically composed, or (iii) is a strongly stressed layer.

20. (Previously Presented): A cutting tool as defined in claim 19, wherein the wear-protection layer is provided at least on a clearance surface and at least on a rake surface, while the top layer does not cover or only partially covers the clearance surface and/or the rake surface.

21. (Previously Presented): A method of making a cutting tool, comprising:

first applying in a PVD coating process a coating to a basic body in a layer sequence including a metallic hard material layer as a wear-protection layer, a separating layer applied at least to one portion of the wear-protection layer, and a top layer on the separating layer, and

subsequently removing the top layer from selected upper surface portions by a mechanical abrading process,

wherein the separating layer has a structure which is not metallic-crystalline, wherein the wear-protection layer has a metallic-crystalline structure, and wherein the separating layer (i) contains or is a chemical compound with a preponderantly covalent bond, (ii) is strongly non-stoichiometrically composed, or (iii) is a strongly stressed layer.

22. (Previously Presented): The method as defined in claim 21, wherein the top layer is removed by a sandblasting process.

23. (Previously Presented): The method as defined in claim 21, wherein all the layers of the coating are applied in a single PVD process.

24. (Currently Amended): The coating as defined in claim [[2]] 1, wherein the top layer is a decorative layer.

25. (Previously Presented): The coating as defined in claim 8, wherein the metal is titanium or zirconium.

26. (Previously Presented): The coating as defined in claim 1, wherein the wear protection layer is predominately in compression, the separating layer is predominately in tension, and the top layer is predominately in compression.

27. (Previously Presented): The coating as defined in claim 1, wherein the separating layer disrupts or disturbs a metallic-crystalline bond between the top layer and the wear-protection layer.